



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



SDNG TO HOST 38TH ANNUAL GOLDEN COYOTE EXERCISE

The South Dakota National Guard will host its 38th annual Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills June 11-25. The Golden Coyote provides military units with relevant training opportunities in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense.

This year's exercise will allow about 900 service members to conduct combat-support and service-support missions in a realistic training environment.

There will be 18 military units from ten states participating in the exercise from the National Guard, Army Reserve, and Navy Reserve. Several soldiers from the South American country of Suriname, South Dakota's State Partnership Program nation, will also be in attendance. Participating units will conduct military operations throughout the region, train on unit missions, employ their equipment, and complete humanitarian and engineer projects.

This year's exercise includes engineer, medical, logistics, aviation, transportation and maintenance units, and offers opportunities to train on individual and collective tasks and battle drills, combat patrols, urban combat operations, medical first aid, casualty evacuation, and convoy operations.

Several units will complete humanitarian missions to transport timber to Native American communities, as well as engineer projects to improve forest infrastructure, trails, and roads.

Residents should be aware of an increase in military traffic throughout the region and in the communities of Rapid City, Hill City, and Custer and can expect an increase in noise levels due to military training. Aircraft will be operating throughout the area and will respond to real-world emergencies during the exercises and remain in an all-hours-ready status.

The public is asked to remain at a safe distance from all moving military vehicles and aircraft to prevent injury to personnel or damage to property.

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THEY MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE, NOW SOUTH DAKOTA IS HONORING THEM

South Dakota's Fallen Hero Bridge program dedicates state bridges to South Dakotans who were killed in action while serving their country or classified as missing in action.

These young men and women, so young and in such a short time, met their destiny on far off battlefields. In return for their great gift, there is nothing more complex or important that we can do but to ensure the memories of their shortened lives go on.

They need to be remembered, not as victims ambushed by some cruel twist of fate, but as idealists who chose to serve and risk their lives. Idealists who were struck down in the pursuit of something bigger than themselves and are forever deserving of our respect, admiration, and remembrance.

These brave warriors who fell in battle were, more often than not, young and in the prime of their life. They were brimming with promise and optimism, and possessing of energy, enthusiasm, idealism, and hope. They were and are truly the strength of our country.

For the greater good of our nation and our citizens they knowingly marched into harm's way. They put everything on the line to ensure our future, even though it meant endangering their own. The veterans we dedicate these bridges to did not just give us their lives, they gave us their futures. Most had more life ahead of them than behind them and did not experience their college graduation, their wedding, or the birth of their first child.

The men and women we honor on these bridges were American soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coast guardsmen who sought service when times were troubled, and our values were challenged.

We are committed to preserving their memories and in demonstration of our will to remember. I ask everyone to participate in one of the 12 bridge dedications scheduled in 2022.

PFC Frederick Farlee and SGT Richard Maynard—June 25 at 10:30 am (MT) at the Pioneer Hall in Dupree.

Cpl John Hutchison—July 1 at 10:30 am (CT) at the Casey Tibbs Rodeo Center in Fort Pierre.

SSG Robert Prue—July 5 at 11:00 am (CT) at the Bishop Jones Auditorium in Mission.

PFC David Gatton—July 16 at 1:00 pm (CT) at the Capitol Lake Visitors Center in Pierre.

SGT James Haider—August 13 at 10:30 am (CT) at the BG Ernie Edwards Readiness Center in Watertown.

PVT August Otto—August 20 at 11:00 am (CT) at the Claire City Community Hall.

CPL Martin Fluegel—September 17 at 1:00 pm (CT) at McCook Central High School in Salem.

PVT Frederic Schroeder—October 1 at 1:00 pm (CT) at the VFW in Madison.

Capt Tommy Callies—November 11 at 9:30 am (CT) at the Howard High School.

S2 Wayne Bridge—November 11 at 2:00 pm (CT) at the Wagner High School.

SSG Daniel Cuka—date and location TBD.

To learn more about South Dakota's fallen heroes bridge dedication program, visit vetaffairs.sd.gov.

Let us never stop educating our youngsters about the price that has been paid for their freedom.

Greg Whitlock, Secretary

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

SDDVA STAFF UPDATES

David Huntimer has joined the SDDVA team and will serve as a field service officer for the southeastern part of the state.

David comes from a career military family that afforded him a lot of travel opportunities in his youth. After graduation, he served four years on active duty with the United States Marine Corps and transferred over to the USMC Reserves for three years while attending college at Augustana University in Sioux Falls. He is now a member of the U.S. Army Reserve and has a combined service of 28 years.

He recently retired from law enforcement after a 25 year career where he handled and trained police service and bomb dogs. During his free-time you will find David enjoying the outdoors and serving as a motorcycle safety instructor.



Huntimer



Denton

As you know, SDDVA is not happy unless we have multiple employees with the same name! Also new to the SDDVA claims office team is David Denson who will serve as a veterans service officer. Originally from Las Vegas, David is a retired Marine, Gunnery Sergeant, who served as an Amphibious Assault Vehicle Crewman with numerous deployments overseas and served as a canvassing recruiter in Sioux Falls.

After retirement he moved back to Sioux Falls with his family and worked for the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Public Safety.

This week, our team at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home hon-

ored two of our retirees, Susan Wilcox and Mary Kay Payton, both of whom are retiring this month. Serving as the director and assistant director of nursing, they have collectively dedicated over 60 years of service to the State of South Dakota.

Words of thanks are not enough for what these two prodigies have done for South Dakota, for the State Veterans

Home and for our veterans. Their dedication, leadership, commitment, expertise, kindness, and work ethic are very much appreciated. We wish them both the best as they retire and start a new chapter in their lives.

MJFSVH Superintendent Chuck Johnson has named Rachelle Butler as the new director of nursing. Butler has been a nurse for 12 years and has worked in hospital and clinic settings, from pediatrics, primary care, emergency care, med surg, home health and long term care. Most recently she served as our infection preventionist.

Last summer, Butler graduated from Capella University with her Masters in Nursing Leadership and Administration.



Butler



VA SUSPENDS ANNUAL REASSESSMENTS IN THE PROGRAM ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs is suspending annual reassessments for participants of the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers while the department continues its review of PCAFC.

This applies to all veterans and family caregivers participating in the program; additionally, the VA will not discharge or reduce stipends based on a reassessment.

“President Biden has made clear ‘because veterans are the backbone, the spine of who we are as a country,’ we have a sacred obligation to care for them, their families, caregivers, and survivors,” said VA Deputy Secretary Donald Remy. “Although we’ve come a long way in supporting caregivers through PCAFC, we have much more work to do. In

our effort to uphold our sacred obligation to families of veterans, the VA continues its review of PCAFC to ensure department requirements and procedures meet the needs of caregivers and veterans participating in the program.”

Facility Caregiver Support Program staff will however continue to initiate reassessments for veterans

and family caregivers for certain purposes, such as when a veteran or caregiver requests to be considered for an increase in stipend level or if there is evidence of an increased need for personal care services. The VA will also continue to conduct wellness visits. Appeal and review options for those who disagree with a PCAFC determination remain the same.

Visit VA’s reassessment updates for more information or contact your local CSP team with any additional questions.



Advance Care Planning Group



Who: YOU

**Where: Sioux Falls Vet Center
(5020 S Broadband Ln, St. 100)**

**When: June 22, 2022
4:00 - 5:00 p.m.**

Planning for the Future

Who do you trust to make medical decisions for you, if you cannot speak for yourself?

What are your wishes for life sustaining treatments to prolong life?

For more information contact:
Susie Morgan, MSW, LICSW
605-336-3230 Ext. 5911

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Sioux Falls VA Health Care System

AMERICAN LEGION TEAM TO VOLUNTEER AT RANCH MINISTRIES

The South Dakota American Legion family and friends will be volunteering at the Ranch Ministries on Saturday, June 11. The Ranch Ministries is located at 30635 208th Street, Pierre and serves active duty and prior military with year around activities including shooting sports, horse therapy, pheasant hunting, fishing, and real hands-on ranch work.

This is a community service outreach project to help a South Dakota non-profit organization that has a direct impact and service to veterans in South Dakota. Activities begin at 8 a.m. Feel free to come early or late - and leave early or late. Tools needed are barb wire fencing tools, chain saws, and hammers.

For more information on the Ranch, go to <https://theranchministries.com/>.

To volunteer please visit this web page: <https://www.sdlegion.org/service/>.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jun 9-12—State VFW Convention—4-H Fairgrounds—(3200 W Havens Avenue)—Mitchell

Jun 12—Midwest Honor Flight Annual Honor Ride—SD Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls

Jun 14—Flag Day

Jun 16-19—State American Legion Conference—Watertown

Jun 18—Midwest Honor Flight 3rd Reunion—Sioux Falls Convention Center—11:00 am (CT)

Jun 19—Father's Day

Jun 25—Lake County Abate Poker Run for Midwest Honor Flight

Jun 20—State Offices Closed

Jun 22—PVA Annual Chapter Picnic—PVA Headquarters—(209 North Garfield Avenue)—Sioux Falls—11:45 am (CT)

Jun 25—PFC Farlee Frederick and SGT Richard Maynard Bridge Dedications—Pioneer Hall—Dupree—10:30 am (MT)

Jun 29-Jul 4—Parkston's Celebration of Freedom—City Park—Parkston

Jul 1—Cpl John Hutchison Bridge Dedication—Casey Tibbs Rodeo Center—Fort Pierre—10:30 am (CT)

Jul 4—Independence Day

Jul 5—SSG Robert Prue Bridge Dedication—Bishop Jones Auditorium—Mission—11:00 am (CT)

Jul 9—Sioux Falls Canaries Military Night

Jul 11—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)

Jul 16—PFC David Gatton Bridge Dedication—Capitol Lake Visitors Center—Pierre—1:00 pm (CT)

Jul 18-23—National Veterans Golden Age Games—Sioux Falls

Jul 20—SD Veterans Council Meeting—Watertown—9:00 am (CT)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 6-9—DAV National Convention—Orlando, FL
Aug 13—James Haider Bridge Dedication—BG Ernie Edwards Readiness Center—Watertown—10:30 am (CT)
Aug 14-19—Military Order of the Purple Heart National Convention—Rapid City
Aug 15-17—SDDVA Annual CTVSO Benefit School
Aug 18-23—USS Iowa Veterans Association Reunion—Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center—Rapid City
Aug 20—PVT August Otto Bridge Dedication—Claire City Community Hall—11:00 am (CT)
Aug 22—The Barrel House Day of Giving fundraiser for Midwest Honor Flight—Sioux Falls
Sep 1—Veterans Day at the South Dakota State Fair
Sep 1-5—South Dakota State Fair
Sep 3—727th/DAV Poker Run—Swiftel Center (824 32nd Avenue)—Brookings—10:00 am (CT)
Sep 5—Labor Day
Sep 10—Heroes Helping with Horsepower Military Appreciation Event—W. Main Street—Ethan—Festivities begin at 8:00 am (CT)
Sep 14-17—Black Hills Veterans March
Sep 17—CPL Martin Fluegel Bridge Dedication—McCook Central High School—Salem—1:00 pm (CT)
Oct 1—PVT Frederic Schroeder Bridge Dedication—VFW—Madison—1:00 pm (CT)
Oct 3—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—(20901 Pleasant Valley Dr)—Sturgis—9:00 am (MT)
Oct 10—Native American Day
Oct 15—Midwest Honor Flight Fifth Annual Hangar Dance—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell Street)—Sioux Falls—7:00 pm (CT)
Oct 21—PVA Dueling Pianos Fundraiser—SD Military Heritage Alliance—(1600 W. Russell Street)—Sioux Falls—7:00 pm (CT)
Nov 5—We've Got Your Six Veterans Appreciation Fair—Sturgis Community Center—(1401 Lazelle Street)—Sturgis—11:00 am—2:00 pm (MT)
Nov 11—Veterans Day
Nov 11—Capt Tommy Callies Bridge Dedication—November 11—Howard High School—9:30 am (CT)
Nov 11—S2 Wayne Bridge Bridge Dedication—Wagner High School—2:00 pm (CT)
Nov 24—Thanksgiving Day
Dec 6—Governor's Budget Address
Dec 17—Wreaths Across America Wreath Laying Ceremony at South Dakota Veterans Cemetery—Sioux Falls—11:00 am (CT)
Dec 25—Christmas
Jan 10—Governor's State of the State Address

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer

South Dakota Department of the Military <https://military.sd.gov/>

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs <https://vetaffairs.sd.gov>

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